

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/480,344

Applicant(s)

RUPPELT ET AL.

Examiner

Art Unit

Nicholas D. Rosen

3625

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the amendment of December 27, 2006.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1,4-9,11-14,17-26 and 29-45.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

Nicholas D. Rosen
NICHOLAS D. ROSEN
PRIMARY EXAMINER

DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1, 4-9, 11-14, 17-26, and 29-45 have been examined.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1, 4-9, 11-13, and 30-33 are allowed.

Claims 14, 17-18, and 34-37 are allowed.

Claims 19-24 and 38-41 are allowed.

Claims 25, 26, 29, and 42-45 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The closest prior art of record, Rofrano (U.S. Patent 6,035,283), discloses a method, tool, computer, and program product for product selection assistance (col. 1, lines 6-14) comprising, *inter alia*, receiving a product category selection (col. 4, lines 34-38); matching the selection against a product database (Abstract); displaying a product matrix (col. 3, lines 55-62; and Table I); presenting a configuration question (col. 4, lines col. 39-42); receiving a configuration answer (col. 4, lines 34-38); and responsively updating the product matrix comprising removing the selected product configuration parameter from the matrix (note box "207" in Fig. 2; and col. 3, lines 55-62). Product color is disclosed (col. 3, lines 55-57). The database described by Rofrano is interpreted as comprising a hard disk storage medium. Model identifiers are considered to be disclosed under the category "ProductName" in Table 1. Such model identifiers are considered to be Rofrano's generic representations of brand name. Rofrano does not disclose displacing the selected product configuration parameter to a visible location outside the product

matrix. Sammon, Jr. (U.S. Patent 6,012,051), however, in a similar product selection method, tool, and program product (col. 1, lines 6-12) teaches maintaining selected product configuration parameters along a side of a navigation window (col. 12, lines 19-43; and Fig. 4: "200"- "203").

Although the combination of Rofrano and Sammon, Jr. et al. teaches displacing the selected product configuration parameter to a visible location outside the product matrix, the combination of Rofrano and Sammon, Jr. et al. does not teach displaying outside the product matrix the product configuration answer, per se. Janssen (U.S. Patent 5,754,850), in a similar method, tool, and program product for product selection assistance (col. 1, lines 12-16; col. 4, line 32-col. 5, line 3), teaches that a product configuration question is presented to a user who responds with an answer to such question. Janssen further teaches that the user is provided with a screen which progressively displays a cumulative listing of the answers (i.e. configuration parameters) provided by the user. See Figures 3 and 4 and col. 4, lines 39-41. For example, Figure 4 has an additional entry (as compared to Figure 3) of "\$350,000". The additional entry indicates that the user selected \$350,000 as the maximum price in display screen 300 of Figure 3 (see col. 4, lines 49-52).

Rofrano does not disclose displaying the updated product matrix, the previous product configuration question, and a new product configuration question in a same display page, but it is well known to display multiple features in a same display page, as taught by Gautestad (U.S. Patent Application Publication 2005/0171947) (Figure 5B; paragraphs 66 and 67), where an updated product matrix is displayed ("286") together

with the previous choice of category, equivalent to a product configuration question ("282"), and a button for displaying a new product configuration ("284"). However, neither Rofrano, Gautestad, nor any other prior art of record discloses modifying the product matrix by inserting another product parameter that defines a corresponding product parameter column to replace the selected product configuration parameter and corresponding column without changing a total number of parameter columns.

(Note: Each of the independent claims contains closely parallel language setting forth the limitation based on which the claims are found allowable.)

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nicholas D. Rosen, whose telephone number is 571-272-6762. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM, M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jeffrey A. Smith, can be reached on 571-272-6763. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300. Non-official/draft communications can be faxed to the examiner at 571-273-6762.

Art Unit: 3625

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Nicholas D. Rosen
NICHOLAS D. ROSEN
PRIMARY EXAMINER

March 1, 2007